

## Stranger Things: Chanukah Edition by neglectedrainbow

**Category:** Stranger Things (TV 2016)

**Genre:** F/F, F/M, Gen, M/M, it's what she deserves.gif, they all celebrate chanukah and are happy and lovely and life is good, they're all jewish

**Language:** English

**Characters:** Barbara "Barb" Holland, Bob (Stranger Things), Dustin Henderson, Eleven (Stranger Things), Erica Sinclair, Jonathan Byers, Joyce Byers, Lonnie Byers (mentioned), Lucas Sinclair, Maxine "Max" Mayfield, Mike Wheeler, Steve Harrington, Will Byers, everyone's alive bc i said so thank u, the whole gang is here!! i love them

**Relationships:** Barbara "Barb" Holland/Nancy Wheeler, Jonathan Byers/Steve Harrington

**Status:** Completed

**Published:** 2017-12-12

**Updated:** 2017-12-12

**Packaged:** 2022-04-03 04:53:47

**Rating:** General Audiences

**Warnings:** No Archive Warnings Apply

**Chapters:** 1

**Words:** 1,705

**Publisher:** archiveofourown.org

**Summary:**

The Byers house is thick with the smell of frying potatoes, onions, and carrots. The scent of rich oil filters through the air. Jonathan stands over the hot stovetop, flipping the latkes with a wooden spoon, feeling the heat radiate upwards across his face. Steve hovers beside him, mashing cooked apples with a fork, melding them into a thick sauce.

OR: Everyone from Stranger Things gets together and celebrates Chanukah, and all is well.

## Stranger Things: Chanukah Edition

### Author's Note:

hello everybody!! i have seen no (zero!!) chanukah stranger things fanfics and that honestly is....unacceptable. so, here you go, a stranger things chanukah fanfic! i love stranger things, i love chanukah, so this is perfect.

also, in case you don't know, here's a helpful explanation of some words:

*latkes* - a traditional chanukah food made by frying potatoes in oil

*pareve* - no meat or dairy

*schmalz* - animal fat sometimes used in cooking (my grandmother's cooking at least)

*shehecheyanu* - a prayer recited for the first night of chanukah (and more)

*mayven* - someone who's really knowledgeable in a certain subject, usually used sarcastically

*israeli salad* - some cucumbers and tomatoes and parsley etc. all tossed together. very very good

*sufganiyot* - a traditional chanukah donut filled with jelly

*chanukiah* - menorah

*purim and rosh hashanah* - other holidays celebrated by jewish people (my favorite is purim)

*shamash* - the "helper" candle used to light all the other candles in a menorah, usually placed higher than the rest

The Byers house is thick with the smell of frying potatoes, onions, and carrots. The scent of rich oil filters through the air. Jonathan stands over the hot stovetop, flipping the latkes with a wooden spoon, feeling the heat radiate upwards across his face. Steve hovers beside him, mashing cooked apples with a fork, melding them into a thick sauce.

Max sits on the ground in the living room, her neck tilted backwards, settled beside Eleven, as her fingers run deftly through her hair, separating out the curls before expertly weaving his hair into two even plaits. Mike, Will, Lucas, and Dustin sit next to them, laughing and telling stories. Across the room, Nancy and Barb reorganize the table yet again, carefully placing napkins and settling the plates.

Bob, flanked by Steve's mom, Jim Hopper, Dustin's mom, and Lucas's parents, sit in the cramped living room as Joyce locates some sparkling water. Erica flutters between the two rooms before eventually settling down beside Eleven.

The latkes sizzle and the oil cools as Jonathan turns off the stove, settling the latkes onto some paper towels to drain as Steve finishes the applesauce.

Then, the two move to the small dining room, working cleanly off of each other, sitting everything down into its place as the other guests filter in. Normally only fit for accommodating Jonathan, Will, and Joyce, the room is rather haphazard, chairs from other rooms of decently similar height pulled in around a cramped table. But, nonetheless, even elbow-to-elbow, no one complains.

There's something about the Byers household, about the delicate unity of it all, that makes them all feel instantly at home.

After everyone finds their seat, nineteen people squeeze into an area normally reserved for three, Jonathan points to one of the plates of latkes, "I made this batch with just olive oil, and a little bit of peanut oil, too, totally pareve, if anyone wants that..."

Max nods, her hand moving to tuck his hair behind her ears before realizing that she doesn't need to, her locks secured tightly in place by Eleven's neat braids. (Nancy taught Eleven how to braid the other

day, and she's been practicing ever since.)

"This one's got a little bit of schmalz." Jonathan gestures to the second plate on the table, slight steam still drifting upwards from the dishes. "Not a lot, though, because-"

"We don't need more of a push towards early heart attacks," Joyce finishes, chuckling. "It's how my mother used to always make them, but some traditions can stay in the past."

Jonathan adds, "And there's some sour cream, too."

"And here's some applesauce, made-" Steve says.

"And almost destroyed at least six times," Jonathan interjects, bumping his shoulder into Steve's jokingly.

Steve turns, fixing his gaze onto Jonathan's. "Maybe so..." His eyes narrow jokily, before a smile breaking over his face. "Anyway, as I was saying, before I was so rudely interrupted, these were made by yours truly. While I may have had some slight mishaps-

"Is almost burning down the house and throwing out multiple batches a slight mishap?" Jonathan says, his expression kind. Joyce watches the exchange bounce back and forth, the delight and happiness on her face clear as can be.

"Hey!"

Jonathan runs a hand through his hair, pushing the brown locks back. "There's a reason I bought extra apples, Steve; I knew this would happen."

Steve turns to the others, his eyebrows raised. "I am, well, I am appalled, frankly, my most passionate love in life, the culinary arts, being harmed and pushed aside in such a frankly offensive way. Frankly, I-"

Laughter breaks through his pretend offense, the end of his sentence faltering off.

After all the time they've spent together, Steve couldn't be more glad

that Jonathan has started joking with him, giving just as good as he's getting.

His heart feels so warm it almost hurts.

Nancy grins, "You've said the word 'frankly' more times in one sentence than most people use it in their entire life."

"It's his new word-of-the-day," Barb nudges Nancy with her elbow as the two descend into a fit of giggles.

"How do you even burn apples?" Lucas interjects, snickering.

Steve huffs. "Why has this suddenly turned into a 'let's all just drag Steve' session?" He leans back into his seat, glancing across the table. "You know what, do you have any wine by any chance, Ms. Byers?"

"Steve!" Dustin says, "you're only eighteen!"

Joyce chuckles, reminding him to "Call me Joyce, honey" for perhaps the seven hundredth time.

Jonathan turns, "You know what, I thought it was kind of impressive, actually," he murmurs, voice low.

Steve glances to him, his foot hooking around Jonathan's ankle underneath the table, their legs flush against each other. "Thanks," he replies, his eyes glittering.

"Oh!" Jonathan untangles himself from Steve, shooting up from the table. "I almost forgot, one moment."

He darts out of the room, yanking open the slightly warm oven and opening the refrigerator, pulling out two wrapped dishes, and returns quickly, setting the plates down onto the quickly filling table. "Of course, Israeli salad, from Bob. And there's sufganiyot, courtesy of Mr. and Mrs. Sinclair, too, on the counter for later. I completely forgot, normally we light the chanukiah and then eat, I completely-I blanked-"

"It's fine, darling," Mrs. Sinclair reassures him warmly.

"I completely forgot as well," Bob agrees. "It's absolutely fine." His voice is low and calm, completely unlike anything Jonathan's used to.

Jonathan blinks a few times, glancing downwards, reminding himself that this isn't Lonnie. That *Bob* isn't Lonnie. He has nothing to worry about.

He has nothing to worry about.

Jonathan inhales deeply, then exhales, tension dripping out of his shoulders. He slowly makes his way back to his seat, his breathing steadying once again, his lips shut tight, trapping the continuing torrent of words and apologies just below the surface. His eyes flicker around the table, taking in the faces and the noises. Nobody's looking at him. Nobody's judging him. The tension drips out of his shoulders.

His mind refocuses as Steve's leg presses against his once again, warm and present. "Quite the culinary mayven," Steve comments, his tone teasing.

Jonathan flicks his arm lightly, his face pinched.

"Hey, hey, hey," Steve backtracks and lightly snatches his wrist, holding it gently, his thumb brushing soothingly over the back of Jonathan's hand. "I didn't meant it like that."

Ducking his head, a blush spreads across Jonathan's cheeks, before Steve catches his chin with a single finger, softly bringing their gaze together. "The great host of what will be a truly wonderful night."

Jonathan's eyes soften, and he leans forward, brushing his lips against Steve's cheek. "Thank you." He swallows, his voice low, for just the two of them. "After everything this year, I just-I just want it all to be perfect."

"And it will be. It already is," Steve replies, encouragingly, pressing a kiss to Jonathan's temple. "Don't worry."

Nancy huffs next to them, "Stop, stop, I can't handle the cuteness, it's too strong! It hurts my eyes."

The two pull back, matching grins across their faces.

The conversation settles, fervor slowing as stomach's fill. Mr. and Mrs. Sinclair talk with Mrs. Wheeler about the annoyances of ever-raising college tuition.

Joyce and Hopper just smile at each other between stealing bits of food of each other's places while Erica tells a story to Bob and Steve.

Barb discusses her interest in becoming a paramedic with Dustin's mom. Mike and Nancy bicker about their favorite holidays, with Nancy arguing for Purim while Mike swears by Rosh Hashanah. Dustin and Will explain the rules of Dungeons and Dragons to Eleven. Across the table, Max and Lucas whisper to each other, laughing continuously.

Jonathan can't stop smiling.

+

Back at their house, Mike and Nancy set up their own menorahs, Mike's with green candles and Nancy's with purple. In his home, Lucas stands by his parents and sister and recites the shehecheyanu, as Barb and her parents tell stories around the table. Dustin and his mom play with their new cat as Hopper teaches Eleven and Max how to play dreidel.

All is well.

+

"You set it up from the right then light it from the left," Steve explains as he removes some blue candles from their plastic bags.

Jonathan nods, swallowing, "I always get it mixed up." He pauses, the tight fabric of his sweater feeling a little rough against his skin, his mind elsewhere, remembering childhood years with Lonnie, standing before a Christmas tree and never truly feeling at home.

He pauses, shaking himself into the present, turning to face Steve. "I'm sorry your parents couldn't be here."

Steve shrugs, "It's fine. Work is wild, you know. Being out of town...it's fine. And I'm here with you, so, feels like a win, doesn't it?"

Softly, nodding, Jonathan places his menorah next to the windowsill. "You want to share with me?"

Steve grins, collecting two particular candles, and joining Jonathan by the window. "You'll let me light the shamash?"

"Of course."

Steve steps closer, stretching his hand out, palm open. Jonathan's fingers wrap around the back of his hand, cold pressed against warm. They stand there for a few moments, the candles pressed between their palms. The smell of latkes and sufganiyot remain in the air, thick and cozy.

Steve's chest constricts. Everything they've been through, just throughout this last year.

Will's disappearance, Eleven's appearance, Nancy and their fight and Tommy, the Demogorgon, how they truly met each other for the first time months later, both so desperate to talk to someone about it but afraid to really do anything.

How Jonathan became such a solid member of his friend group after that, how Barb and Nancy finally admitted their feelings for one another. How *he* and Jonathan finally admitted their feelings for each other.

Their first kiss.

He remembers it all. He's so proud of them.

Jonathan pulls his hand away slowly, fingertips lingering softly as he takes one of the candles.

Steve strikes the long match evenly against the box's phosphorus side a few times. As the flame finally ignites, the two boys feel ready to begin again. A new start.



And it's beautiful.

**Author's Note:**

and there you go! my experience with chanukah is pretty similar to jonathan's (didn't really experience it much as a child, but am now reconnecting with my actual faith, and feeling pretty awesome about it). i hope that, if you celebrate it, you have a lovely and rewarding chanukah.

also...find me on tumblr at [neglectedrainbow](#) and talk to me about anything at all!